Saskatchewan
Agriculture
and Food

FINAL REPORT

BEEF DEVELOPMENT FUND

19990392

BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND FOOD SAFETY PROJECTS
FOR SASKATCHEWAN

Funded by
The Beef Development Fund

June, 2005

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C/o Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association

105-06132/

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Final Report

Saskatchewan Beef Development Fund Board

Project 19990392 RES B045

A. Summary

The multi-faceted proposal "Beef Quality Assurance and Food Safety Projects for Saskatchewan" was designed to create tools and strategies to assist beef producers in adapting food safety and quality programs within their respective operations. The goal of these strategies is to improve consumer confidence in beef products and to maintain our market competitiveness.

B. Technical Report

1. Trainer Workshops

Trainer Workshops were held in 1999 to update members of the Saskatchewan QSH Speakers' Bureau. Approximately 40 speakers from locations across Saskatchewan attended these informative sessions on the progression of the Quality Starts Here program on a national level as well as the formation of the Canadian Cattlemen's Identification Agency. It is important that our Speakers' Bureau be able to pass on the most current information to producers in Saskatchewan in order to keep them abreast of trends in the marketplace.

A Speakers' update was not held in 2000 because funding was not received until December; at this time our Speakers' bureau was already busy attending speaking engagements throughout the province to discuss the QSH and CCIA programs.

We again held a Speakers' update on November 1, 2001 at the Saskatoon Travelodge with approximately 40 members of the Speakers' bureau attending along with provincial Livestock Agrologists, veterinary pharmaceutical representatives, and representatives from provincial livestock associations. Cindy McCreath from CCA, Rob McNabb from the National QSH committee, Julie Stitt from CCIA, Joan Perrin from BIC and Ted Haney from CBEF provided the latest information on their respective programs to the audience gathered there.

These updates are crucial to our network of Speakers as well as to other industry representatives who attended this meeting. These Speakers are responsible for delivering the most current information to producers and the cattle industry in Saskatchewan. With the full implementation of the CCIA program in July, 2001 and the

advancement of the QSH program it is necessary to keep our information bureau provided with the latest details of these programs. The CCA has congratulated Saskatchewan on their accomplishments in educating our producers on National ID as well as advancing the QSH program.

2. Meat Quality Workshops

Six seminars were held in various locations around Saskatchewan in 2002 to educate producers on the negative effects of improper injection techniques on beef quality. Subject animals (animals chronically ill with various medical conditions) were purchased from local producers and injected with several commonly used pharmaceuticals. These products were injected in a manner not approved by label directions (i.e. injected intramuscularly when label directions stated sub-cutaneously) or injecting larger than recommended doses or injecting products into the hip of the animal where the higher priced cuts of beef are found. Dr. Larry Frischke of Wyeth Animal Health performed the injection procedures and kept a "map" of which products were injected in which location on each animal and also marking the injection sites by clipping a small patch of hair over each site. Two weeks after injection, the animal was euthanized in a humane manner and the injection sites were dissected to see the effects of incorrect drug usage on the muscle tissue around the injection site.

A video of the injection site damage seen at these post-mortems was made, to be edited into a production to be made available to beef producer groups throughout the province.

At the 2002 seminars a presentation was also made by Wyeth Animal Health on their large animal vaccines; the Quality Starts Here program and the National ID program also provided beef producers with additional management updates.

Acknowledgement of funds provided by Saskatchewan Beef Development Fund was present on all advertising and printed material and was announced at the seminars as well.

3. Communication Tools

In order to keep the QSH message before the more than 20,000 beef producers within Saskatchewan, we continued our presence at beef and non-beef trade shows and fairs throughout the province. With the continuing evolving of the National ID program, questions on this topic are also answered at these events as well.

During the period from April 1. 2001 to March 31, 2002 we had our display set up at the Yorkton Harvest Showdown, Saskatoon Fall Fair, Lloydminster Cattlemen's Corral, and at Canadian Western Agribition.

4. Project Administration

The Secretariat-Coordinator duties of the Saskatchewan Quality Starts Here Working Group were handled by Nikki Smith, Executive Administrator for the Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association up until a Provincial Coordinator was hired as of April 1, 2002. Duties included organization of meetings, distribution of minutes, accounting and reporting to various funding agencies.

6. Acknowledgement

The Saskatchewan Quality Starts Here Working Group is grateful for the funding provided to us by the Saskatchewan Beef Development Fund to continue development of tools and strategies to assist Saskatchewan beef producers to adapt food safety and quality practices within their operations. This leadership will continue to boost consumer confidence in our top quality Canadian beef and to enhance our place in worldwide markets. SBDF support was gratefully acknowledged by signage and by presenters at all of the above listed events.